

AMENDED CLAIMS

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original claims 1-20 replaced by amended claims 1-44 (6 pages)]

1. Telecommunications apparatus comprising a telephone network, a telephone terminal operable to enable a user to specify dialling information in a form that comprises text, means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text, the network being adapted to receive an indialled call from the terminal, to set up the connection associated with the text and to connect the indialled call with the connection associated with the text.
2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the said means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text is within the network.
3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2, in which the terminal is operable to transmit text dialling information to the network.
4. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, in which the means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text is partly within the network and partly within the terminal.
5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 4, in which the terminal is operable to transmit partly processed text dialling information to the network.
6. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, in which transmission of text dialling information occurs before the indialled call, or at least partly in parallel with the indialled call.
7. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 6, in which the terminal is a mobile terminal.
8. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 7, in which the text dialling information is addressed to a service number.

9. Apparatus as claimed in claim 8, in which the indialled call is addressed to a service number.

10. Apparatus as claimed in claim 9, in which the text dialling information and the indialled call are addressed to the same service number.

11. Apparatus as claimed in claim 8, 9 or 10, in which the service number is a short code or international number.

12. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 11, in which the text dialling information is transmitted as a text message, such as an SMS, EMS or GPRS text message.

13. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which an acknowledgement is returned to the telephone terminal indicating that the network has processed the text dialling information.

14. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the text dialling information is processed at least partly in parallel with the indialled call.

15. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text is operable to process the text intelligently using a system of exceptions, classes and rules to derive an alphanumeric string from the text.

16. Apparatus as claimed in claim 15, in which the means to process the dialling information is further operable to determine a desired connection based on the derived alphanumeric string.

17. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the

text retains memory of the connection and is operable to make a reconnection without re-entry of the text.

18. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text is operable to translate between text dialling information and connections that are personalised to a particular individual or closed group of individuals.

19. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the means to process the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text is operable to make connections to services and to generate service usage statistics regarding the numbers of calls to particular services and the text dialling information used to identify them.

20. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 19, in which the connection associated with the text is characterised as a telephone number.

21. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 19, in which the connection associated with the text is characterised without reference to a telephone number.

22. A method of operating telecommunications apparatus comprising a telephone network and a telephone terminal, the method comprising the steps of employing the terminal to enable a user to specify dialling information in a form that comprises text, processing the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text, dialling a call to the network, setting up the connection associated with the text in response to the dialled call and connecting the dialled call with the connection associated with the text.

23. A method as claimed in claim 22, in which the step of processing the dialling information to identify the connection associated with the text employs means within the network.

24. A method as claimed in claim 23, in which text dialling information is transmitted from the terminal to the network.

25. A method as claimed in claim 22, in which the step of processing the dialling information to identify the connection associated with the text employs means partly within the network and partly within the terminal.

26. A method as claimed in claim 25, in which partly processed text dialling information is transmitted from the terminal to the network.

27. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 26, in which transmission of text dialling information occurs before the indialled call, or at least partly in parallel with the indialled call.

28. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 27, in which the terminal is a mobile terminal.

29. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 28, in which the text dialling information is addressed to a service number.

30. A method as claimed in claim 29, in which the indialled call is addressed to a service number.

31. A method as claimed in claim 30, in which the text dialling information and the indialled call are addressed to the same service number.

32. A method as claimed in claim 29, 30 or 31, in which the service number is a short code or international number.

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33. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 32, in which the text dialling information is transmitted as a text message, such as an SMS, EMS or GPRS text message.

34. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 33, in which an acknowledgement is returned to the telephone terminal indicating that the network has processed the text dialling information.

35. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 34, in which the text dialling information is processed at least partly in parallel with the indialled call.

36. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 35, in which the step of processing the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text, comprises processing the text intelligently using a system of exceptions, classes and rules to derive an alphanumeric string from the text.

37. A method as claimed in claim 36, in which a desired connection is determined based on the derived alphanumeric string.

38. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 37, in which the step of processing the dialling information to identify a connection associated with the text comprises retaining memory of the connection and making a reconnection without re-entry of the text.

39. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 38, in which dialling information is translated between text dialling information and connections that are personalised to a particular individual or closed group of individuals.

40. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 39, in which dialling information is processed to make connections to services and service usage statistics are generated regarding the numbers of calls to particular services and the dialling information used to identify them.

41. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 40, in which the connection associated with the text is characterised as a telephone number.

42. A method as claimed in any one of claims 22 to 40, in which the connection associated with the text is characterised without reference to a telephone number.

43. A computer program for implementing a method according to any one of claims 22 to 42.

44. A storage medium storing a computer program according to claim 43.